IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration; ~~and~~

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein an extension direction of at least one of said at least two extensions is normal to said tube.

2. (Original) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said at least two axially displaced extensions comprises at least three extensions, which three extensions extend in at least three different directions from said tube.

3. (Original) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said at least two axially displaced extensions comprises at least four extensions, which four extensions extend in at least four different directions from said tube.

4. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are straight.

5. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are curved.

6. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are defined by a cut in said tube.

7. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are defined by a section removed from said tube.

8. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are substantially parallel to said tube axis.

9. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are not parallel to said tube axis.

10. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are arranged in pairs of same length.

11. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said slits are arranged in pairs of different lengths.

12. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein slits associated with one extension axially overlap slits associated with a second, axially displaced, extension.

13. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said proximal end of said tube defines a proximal end-cap, which end-cap extends outside of a volume defined by the geometry of said extended extensions.

14. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said distal end of said tube defines a distal end-cap, which end-cap extends outside of a volume defined by the geometry of said extended extensions.

15. (Original) A spacer according to claim 13, wherein at least one of said extensions is flush with said proximal end of said tube.

16. (Original) A spacer according to claim 13, wherein at least one of said extensions is flush with said distal end of said tube.

17. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, comprising at least one spur axially extending from said spacer, to engage tissue adjacent said spacer.

18. (Original) A spacer according to claim 17, wherein said at least one spur comprises at least two spurs axially extending from said spacer.

19. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, comprising an inner bolt.

20. (Original) A spacer according to claim 19, wherein said inner bolt has a smooth exterior.

21. (Original) A spacer according to claim 19, wherein said inner bolt has a threaded exterior.

22. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 19, wherein said bolt has a base, which base has an external diameter greater than an inner diameter of said tube, such that said base restricts axial motion of the tube in one direction relative to the bolt.

23. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 19, wherein said bolt has a head, which head locks against at least one end of said tube, to prevent axial expansion of said tube.

24. (Original) A spacer according to claim 23, wherein said head is adapted to engage at least one protrusions extending from said tube toward said bolt head.

25. (Original) A spacer according to claim 23, wherein said head comprises at least one protrusions extending from said head toward said tube, to engage said tube.

26. (Original) A spacer according to claim 23, wherein said head comprises a flange, flared to have an outer diameter greater than an inner diameter of said tube.

27. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 19, wherein said bolt is adapted to engage a pole element for holding said bolt during deployment of said spacer.

28. (Original) A spacer according to claim 27, wherein said bolt has an inner thread for engaging said pole element.

29. (Original) A spacer according to claim 27, wherein said bolt mechanically engages said pole element as long as a head of said bolt is constrained by said tube.

30. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer comprises a plurality of segments, each segment defining one or more extensions that extend from said spacer.

31. (Original) A spacer according to claim 30, wherein said segments comprises at least two segment types, each segment type defining extensions that extend in different directions relative to said tube.

32. (Original) A spacer according to claim 31, wherein said two segment types comprises a horizontal segment defining two extensions that extend along a line and a segment defining four extensions that extend at about ±45° to said two extensions.

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein an extension direction of at least one of said at least two extensions defines a sharp angle with said tube axis, in a plane containing said tube axis.

35. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions does not extend along a direction perpendicular to said tube.

36. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, in a plane containing said tube axis, a profile of a triangle, with a triangle tip pointed away from said tube.

37. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, in a plane containing said tube axis, a curved profile.

38. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, in a plane containing said tube axis, a profile that narrows and then widens, along a direction away from the tube.

39. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, in a plane perpendicular to said tube axis, a profile that narrows, along a direction away from the tube.

40. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, in a plane perpendicular to said tube axis, a profile that narrows and then widens, along a direction away from the tube.

41. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, in a plane perpendicular to said tube axis, a uniform profile.

42. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, a pointed top profile.

43. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, a top profile substantially the same size as a base of said extension.

44. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said at least two extensions has, a top profile substantially larger than a base of said extension.

45. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said extensions are unevenly distributed along said axis.

46. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said extensions are evenly distributed along said axis.

47. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said extensions are unevenly distributed along a circumference of said tube.

48. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said extensions are evenly distributed along a circumference of said tube.

49. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said different ones of said extensions have different geometries.

50. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said extensions are distributed in a spiral pattern.

51. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is coaxial with an axis of said expanded geometry.

52. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is parallel to an axis of said expanded geometry.

53. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is not-parallel to an axis of said expanded geometry.

54. (Original) A spacer according to claim 53, wherein said tube axis and said expanded geometry axis are designed for oblique insertion of a spacer to be aligned, in its expanded state with vertebra.

55. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer has an expanded geometry cross-section of a circle.

56. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer has an expanded geometry trans-axial cross-section of a rectangle.

57. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a cross-section of said expanded geometry varies along an axis of said expanded geometry.

58. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a trans-axial cross-section diameter of said expanded geometry varies along an axis of said expanded geometry.

59. (Original) A spacer according to claim 58, wherein said cross-section is rectangular and wherein said cross-sectional diameter increases along said expanded geometry axis.

60. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a cross-section diameter of said tube varies along an axis of said tube.

61. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a cross-section of said tube varies along an axis of said tube.

62. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube has a circular cross-section.

63. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube has an elliptical cross-section.

64. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube has a rectangular trans-axial cross-section.

65. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is bent, when the spacer is unexpanded.

66. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is straight when the spacer is unexpanded.

67. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is bent when the spacer is expanded.

68. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube axis is straight when the spacer is expanded.

69. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, comprising a ratchet mechanism to maintain said spacer in an expanded configuration.

70. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, comprising at least one portion of said spacer that prevents axial contraction of said spacer.

71. (Original) A spacer according to claim 70, wherein said at least one portion comprises a pair of tabs that abut when the spacer is axially contracted.

72. (Original) A spacer according to claim 70, wherein said at least one portion comprises a strip that folds and forms a thickness between two opposing sides of said spacer, preventing the opposing sides from meeting.

73. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, comprising at least one protrusion on at least one of said extensions, to prevent collapsing of said extension.

74. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, comprising at least one protrusion on at least one of said extensions, to interlock said two extensions.

75. (Currently Amended) An expandable spacer ~~according to claim 1,~~ comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration; and

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein the spacer comprises at least one interconnecting element for interconnecting said extensions when the extensions are expanded.

76. (Original) A spacer according to claim 75, wherein said interconnecting element comprises a flexible wire.

77. (Original) A spacer according to claim 75, wherein said interconnecting element comprises a substantially rigid strut.

78. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises only bending joints.

79. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least one twisting joint.

80. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises a lift-up-extension in which a significant axial section of the tube is lifted away from said tube to form said expanded geometry.

81. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least two legs that are coupled by an extension top.

82. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least three legs that are coupled by a<u>n</u> extension top.

83. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least four legs that are coupled by a<u>n</u> extension top.

84. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least two legs, which legs are aligned with the tube axis.

85. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of annealed locations are provided on said spacer to assist in expansion of said spacer.

86. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of etched locations are provided on said spacer to assist in expansion of said spacer.

87. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of holes are provided on said spacer to assist in expansion of said spacer.

88. (Original) A spacer according to claim 87, wherein said holes distribute stress in said spacer.

89. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is annealed as a unit.

90. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer comprises means for changing the axial length of the spacer over time, after the spacer is implanted.

91. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is formed of metal.

92. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is formed of plastic.

93. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is formed of a combination of distinct zones of different materials.

94. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer comprises an elastic material, which is elastically deformed by the extension deformation.

95. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer comprises a plastic material, which is plastically deformed by the extension deformation.

96. (Previously presented A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer comprises a super-elastic material, which is super-elastically deformed by the extension deformation.

97. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer comprises a shape-memory material.

98. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is adapted to be axially deformed <u>only</u> under axial pressures of over 20 Kg.

99. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is adapted to be axially deformed only under axial pressures of over 30 Kg.

100. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is adapted to be axially deformed only under axial pressures of over 50 Kg.

101. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is adapted to be axially deformed only under axial pressures of over 70 Kg.

102. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is adapted to be axially deformed only under axial pressures of over 90 Kg.

103. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is adapted to remain expanded in a vertebra of an active human, when placed with the tube axis perpendicular to a spine of said human.

104. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube has a cross-sectional diameter smaller than half the maximal cross-sectional diameter of said expanded geometry.

105. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said tube has a cross-sectional diameter smaller than a quarter of the maximal cross-sectional diameter of said expanded geometry.

106. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said expanded geometry is sized to fit between two human vertebrae.

107-109. (Cancelled)

110. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said expanded geometry covers at least 40% of the surface of a target vertebra, previously contacting a disc.

111. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said expanded geometry covers at least 60% of the surface of a target vertebra, previously contacting a disc.

112. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said expanded geometry covers at least 80% of the surface of a target vertebra, previously contacting a disc.

113-115. (Cancelled)

116. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is coated with a bio-active coating.

117. (Original) A spacer according to claim 116, wherein said bio-active coating retards bone ingrowth.

118. (Original) A spacer according to claim 116, wherein said bio-active coating promotes bone ingrowth.

119. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said extensions comprises spikes.

120. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the extensions is designed to carry greater stress and has an increased strength over another extension.

121. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer has an angular orientation.

122. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least two of said at least two extensions are designated to hold apart two vertebra.

123. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said spacer is lordotic.

124. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said extensions is adapted to be embed in vertebral bone.

125-147. (Cancelled)

148. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said at least two axially displaced extensions comprises at least three displaced extensions, which three extensions extend in a same transaxial direction from said tube.

149-208. (Cancelled)

209. (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1, wherein said at least two axially displaced extensions comprises at least six displaced extensions, which six extensions extend in a same transaxial direction from said tube.

210. (Cancelled)

211 (Previously presented) A spacer according to claim 1 and comprising: a locking element adapted to axially lock said spacer when axially compressed, to prevent axial expansion thereof.

212. (Currently Amended) A spacer according to claim 1 wherein spacer is adapted, during said axial compression, to extend out said extensions to provide a diameter of between~~at least~~ three to six times a diameter of the spacer in a non-axially compressed state.

213. (Cancelled)

214. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other

along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said extensions are unevenly distributed along said axis.

215. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein different ones of said extensions have different geometries.

216. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said extensions are distributed in a spiral pattern.

217. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said tube axis is bent, when the spacer is unexpanded.

218. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said tube axis is bent, when the spacer is expanded.

219. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said spacer includes a ratchet mechanism to maintain said spacer in an expanded configuration.

220. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said spacer comprises at least one portion that prevents axial contraction of said spacer, the at least one portion including a pair of tabs that abut when the spacer is axially contracted or a strip that folds and forms a thickness between two opposing sides of said spacer, preventing the opposing sides from meeting.

221. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said spacer comprises at least one protrusion on at least one of said extensions, to prevent collapsing of said extension.

222. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein a plurality of holes are provided on said spacer to assist in expansion of said spacer.

223. (New) A spacer according to claim 222, wherein said holes distribute stress in said spacer.

224. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least one twisting joint.

225. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least three legs that are coupled by an extension top.

226. (New) A spacer according to claim 225, wherein at least one of said extensions comprises at least four legs that are coupled by a extension top.

227. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an cxpanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said spacer comprises a shape-memory material or a super-elastic material, which is super-elastically deformed by the extension deformation.

228. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein at least one of the extensions is designed to carry greater stress and has an increased strength over another extension.

229. (New) An expandable spacer, comprising:

an axial tube having a surface provided along an initial contour, a proximal end, a distal end and a length,

wherein, said surface defines a plurality of axially displaced slits, said plurality of slits defining at least two extensions, such that when said tube is axially compressed, said extensions extend out of said initial contour and define a geometry of an expanded spacer;

wherein when the tube is axially compressed, the at least two extensions have respective peaks farthest radially from the tube, the peaks of the extensions being separated from each other along the tube axis by portions of said surface situated radially inwards of said peaks in the axially compressed configuration;

wherein said spacer is adapted for support of two vertebral plates on either side of the spacer, and

wherein said slits are curved.